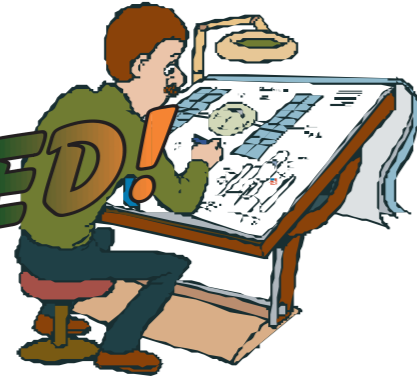


WELL DESIGNED!

The Toucan

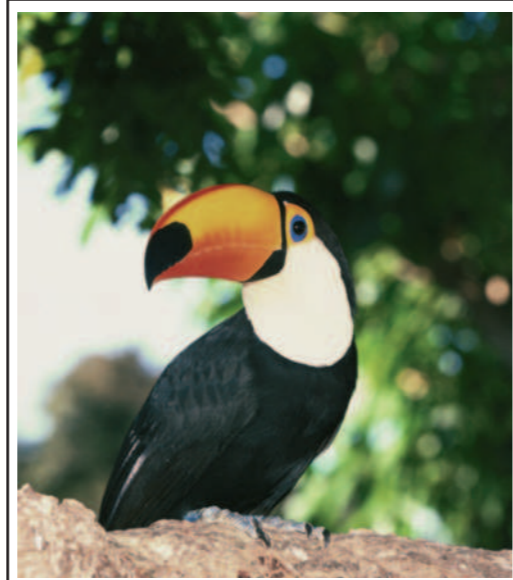


TOUCANS are clumsy-looking birds, ranging in size from 36 cm. (14 ins.) long, to 63cm. (25 ins.) long in the largest species, the Toco Toucan. The most noticeable thing about them is their brightly-coloured, over-sized beak, which is sometimes as long as their body and four times as large as their head. Marc Meyers, a materials scientist and professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering grew up in the forests of Brazil 40 years ago, and was fascinated by the structure of toucans' beaks which he sometimes found.

Science Daily (November 30th 2005) reported that Dr Meyers had closely analysed the toucan's beak, and found that inside the outer shell the beak is like a honey-comb, with lots of air spaces. He said it was "optimized to an amazing degree for high strength and very little weight. It's almost as if the toucan has a deep knowledge of mechanical engineering." In fact, the beak is so well designed for lightness and strength that makers of cars and aircraft plan to copy its design to make "ultra-light aircraft and vehicle components with synthetic foams made with metals and polymers." Dr Meyers describes it as a "high-energy impact-absorption system" that car makers hope to copy to make panels that

will provide better protection for motorists involved in car crashes.

Evolution over long periods of time can't explain the origin of the toucan's large, yet light beak structure, and there is no evidence that toucans evolved from ancestors with smaller beaks. If the honey-comb pattern had changed gradually from a solid beak, the birds would have found it difficult to fly because their beaks would have been too heavy. This is another excellent example of a divine design that human engineers are happy to copy.



The Toucan's beak is well designed for both lightness and strength

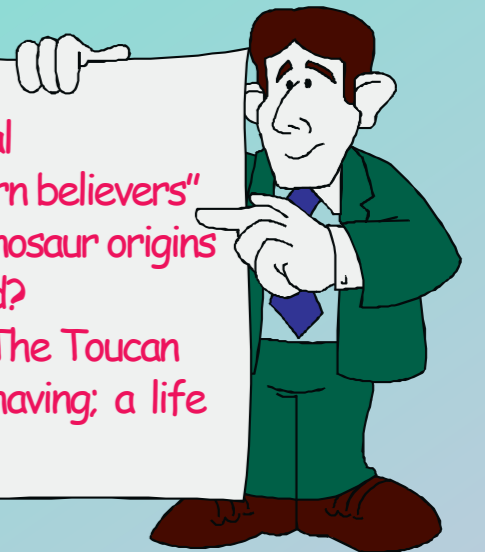
Wikipedia photo by Jenny Huang

The REAL SCIENCE paper!

ORIGINAL VIEW OBSCURITY

No. 61

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Children are "born believers"
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WHY ARE HUMANS RELIGIOUS?

Human beings, unlike any other living creature, are incurably religious. Wherever people live, whether in modern cities or remote jungle villages, you will find some kind of belief in the supernatural.

Archaeologists tell us that wherever evidence of human civilisation is found, religion was part of it. Some religion involves the worship idols or images (right), some the spirits of dead ancestors, others an invisible deity. Atheists and secular scientists, who deny the existence of a supernatural realm, struggle to find an explanation for the origin of religion. Some say it is just a left-over from primitive magic and superstition, and are puzzled by the fact that religious belief not only persists in the 21st century, but is actually growing throughout the world.

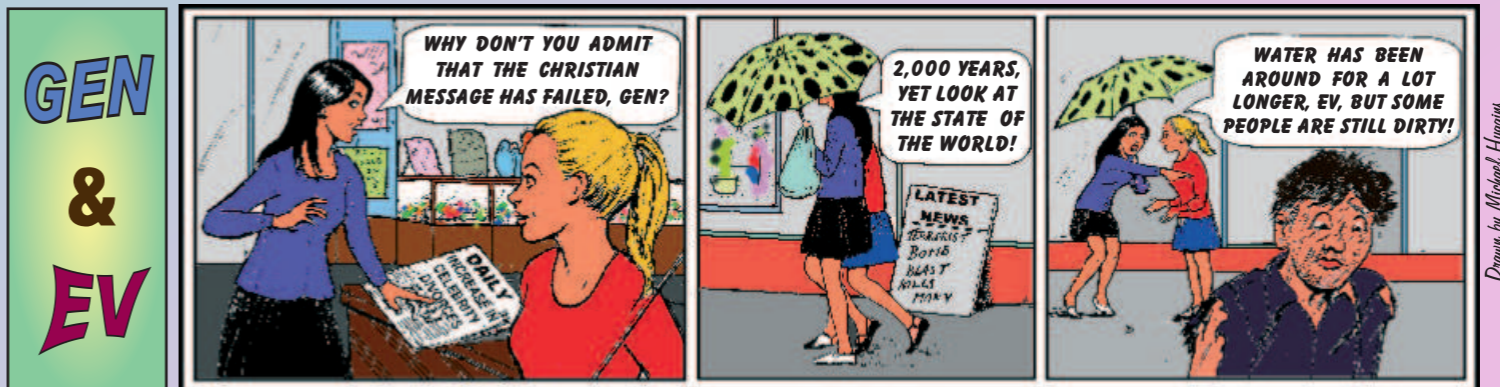


We believe there is a better explanation: that humans were created by God to have a relationship with Him, and that, as famous scientist Blaise Pascal said (left), there is a "God-shaped vacuum" in our hearts. This makes sense of the fact that most people yearn for something beyond themselves and their physical, earthly existence.

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"There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus."
— Blaise Pascal.



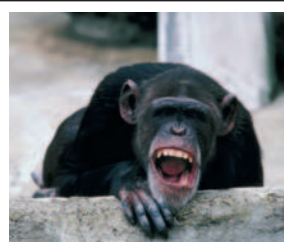
Drawn by Michael Huang

A faith worth having; a life worth living!

Evolutionists claim (without proof) that we are closely related to apes. But there is no evidence that apes (or any other animals) have any spiritual awareness. They don't pray or worship. Yet humans are religious by nature, whether they worship many gods or goddesses, man-made idols, or one God. If there is no God, we are just accidents of evolution, and life becomes pointless. Deep within us there seems to be a hunger for something outside ourselves, and beyond the physical realm. This is why efforts to destroy religion always fail. Of course, people can always find excuses to explain religion away if they wish. Blaise Pascal wrote, "In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadow for those who don't." The Bible says: "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." (Hebrews 11: 6)



Atheists often claim that they can live upright, moral lives without religion, which, of course, is true. But how do they decide right from wrong without some higher authority or reference point? Ultimately, it means making up our own rules — and changing them if we wish, which leads to moral anarchy. Of course, many terrible things have been done in the name of religion. Jesus Christ faced His greatest opposition from the religious leaders of His time, and it was they who eventually had Him crucified. But through His death and resurrection Jesus offers us a true relationship with God. A faith that is not based on keeping rules or placating a hostile deity, but based on love for a God who created us in His image, and who loved us first. **That's a faith worth having and a life worth living!**



Apes don't pray or worship

Smile, please

What's round and bad-tempered? A vicious circle.

Why didn't the skeleton go to the party?
He had no body to go with!

Mother: Doctor, my son has swallowed a roll of film!
Doctor: Oh dear. We shall have to see how things develop.

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ATHEISTS IN DENIAL!

ATHEISTS must be in denial when they reject belief in the existence of a spiritual realm. Religious belief is universal wherever humans live, and wherever they have lived in the past. The theory that religion is a primitive remnant of an earlier evolutionary stage of development is refuted by the fact that faith is growing in the modern world.¹ It is atheism that is in decline! All attempts to destroy religion have failed, and there are more religions and religious ideologies in the world today than ever before; humans are incurably religious!

Evolutionists believe that humans evolved from ape-like ancestors, and that religion started with belief in spirits which began to be identified with imaginary personalities, who eventually became gods. As time went on, the theory goes, belief in many gods (polytheism) evolved into belief in one supreme god, (monotheism). But the evidence indicates the opposite: "Research suggests that virtually all so-called "primitive" tribes have a memory of a "high God" who is also fatherly and good. There is also growing evidence that the sacrifices of witchdoctors for magical purposes are a degeneration from higher forms rather than a remnant of primitive religion."² The Bible's account of the origin of religion supports this. In the beginning, true religion — the worship of the one Creator-God — was *revealed* to man by God Himself.



The Parthenon in Athens, built in 438 BC for the worship of the Greek goddess Athena

Wikipedia photo by Kallistos

After human sin spoilt the relationship between God and humans, there was a drift into the worship of false gods and idols, but this was *de-volution*. Rather than accept that humans have a spiritual dimension, atheists often turn to the "who-made-God?" argument. But the followers of the three major religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam, all agree that God is not a physical Being, but a spiritual Being, who is outside of time and space. So the "who-made-god?" argument is irrelevant as well as unscientific. Pascal's explanation (see page one) makes much more sense!

1. *God is Back!* John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, Penguin Books, 2009.
2. *The Lion Handbook of the Bible*, Lion Publishing, 1976, p. 29.



Mao Zedong (left) was the Communist ruler of China from 1949-1976. His policies and political purges from 1949 to 1975 are widely believed to have been responsible for the deaths of between 50 and 70 million people. Zedong promised to eradicate Christianity from China. Today there are more Christians in China than members of the Communist Party, with at least 20,000 conversions every day!

Children are "born believers"!

Scientific studies have shown that children believe in God naturally, and don't have to be taught to be religious. Dr Justin Barrett, a senior researcher at the University of Oxford's Centre for Anthropology and Mind, said that children are "born believers" in God and do not simply acquire religious beliefs through indoctrination.¹ Dr Barrett said there is evidence that even by the age of four, children understand that although some objects are made by humans, the natural world is different. He added that this means children are more likely to believe in creationism than evolution, despite what they may be told by parents or teachers.



Children naturally believe in divine creation

"Children's normally and naturally developing minds make them prone to believe in divine creation and intelligent design. In contrast, evolution is unnatural for human minds; relatively difficult to believe." This evidence is a real problem for atheists like Professor Richard Dawkins, who claims that people get religion from their parents and that, like belief in Santa Claus, they will outgrow it. But the analogy is flawed. Former atheist Professor Alister McGrath asked, "How many people do you know who started to believe in Santa Claus in adulthood?"² *New Scientist* commented: "If children have an innate belief in god, however, where does that leave the indoctrination hypothesis?"³

1. *Daily Telegraph* 24th November 2008. 2. *Daily Mail* 9th February 2007. 3. *New Scientist*, 7th February 2009.

Former atheist now believes In God and creation

"My parents brought me up to be an atheist — and they failed miserably!" That's the testimony of Dr A. J. Monty White (right) who holds a B.Sc (Hons) and Ph.D in chemistry. As would be expected, as an atheist he believed in evolution, and when he became a Christian in 1964, he assumed that evolution was God's method. However, Monty is now one of the UK's leading speakers on the creation-evolution controversy, and has authored several books on the subject. How did this happen? His scientific studies convinced him that evolution was scientifically flawed. He says, "I became a creationist by reading evolution textbooks!" Monty's experience certainly disproves the theory that people only believe in God because they were brought up to do so.



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IN THE NEWS

Confusion over dinosaurs' origins



Ever since Darwin's time, evolutionists have claimed that birds evolved from reptiles, with dinosaurs being the most likely candidate. There have always been serious problems with this idea, including the problem of evolving scales into feathers, explaining how birds came by their unique respiratory system, and how ground-based creatures began to fly. Recently, some scientists came up with a weird alternative theory:

dinosaurs evolved *from* birds! This theory is based on a study of fossils of a fossil bird called *microraptor* (left), discovered in 2003, which had feathers on its hind limbs. Scientists made three-dimensional models to study how it might have flown, and concluded that it must have been a "glider" that came down from the trees.¹ Zoology professor John Ruben said: "We're finally breaking out of the conventional wisdom of the last 20 years, which insisted that birds evolved from dinosaurs and that the debate is all over and done with. This issue isn't resolved at all. There are just too many inconsistencies with the idea that birds had dinosaur ancestors, and this newest study adds to that."

This latest theory presents evolutionists with a new problem: if dinosaurs evolved from birds, then what did the birds evolve from? Will they consider the possibility that neither dinosaurs nor birds evolved from anything, but were created by God?

1. *Science Daily* 10th February 2010.



The origin of feathers is a major problem for evolutionists

IS DEATH THE END?

Wherever humans live you will find belief in some kind of afterlife, and archaeology reveals this has always been the case. Only humans honour and bury their dead, or think about what happens after they die. This is one of the many things which sets us apart from animals. Evolution can't explain this, but the Bible does: God has "set eternity in the hearts of men." (*Ecclesiastes 3: 11*). Deep down, we sense there is more to human life than our physical existence.

There are lots of different beliefs about life after death. Some people believe in reincarnation — the idea that we are reborn in another form, either as another person or even an animal, or plant. There are lots of strong arguments against this idea, one of which is that if everyone had a past life, the world population would not keep on growing!

Christians believe that the strongest evidence that death is not the end is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sceptics object that it's impossible to prove the resurrection scientifically. However, it's not a matter of science, but of **history**, to be judged like all historical events — on the evidence of witnesses. In this case, all the witnesses speak with one voice: three days after Jesus had been crucified and certified dead, His tomb was found to be empty, and He was seen alive by numerous eyewitnesses, some of whom even claimed to have had a meal with Him. Writing less than 30 years after the event, Paul of Tarsus reported that he knew of more than 500 people who had met the risen Christ at the same time, and most of them were still living. (*1 Corinthians 15: 6*). Surely the people who were there are more qualified to say what happened than sceptics who are 2,000 years removed from the event?

Christianity is the world's fastest-growing faith, with about 2 billion followers, but if you read how it began it is clear that it would never have got off the ground if the resurrection never happened. Lord Caldicote, Lord Chief Justice of England, (1940-46) declared that the evidence for the resurrection convinced him that it was a "fact beyond dispute." The evidence does add up. Check it out for yourself if you're not convinced. See what the Bible says about life after death, and how, through faith in the Living Christ, you can enjoy eternal life.



The Garden Tomb (above) in Jerusalem may not be the actual tomb of Jesus, but the historical evidence supports the Christian claim that His tomb was found to be empty 3 days after He was buried.

Wikipedia photo